

# THE CARGO COURIER

123rd Airlift Wing, Kentucky Air National Guard, Louisville, Ky.

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## Wing provides relief for victims of Katrina

Unit members deploy to assist with rescues, medical care, security

By Capt. Dale Greer  
Wing Public Affairs Officer

Nearly 100 members of the Kentucky Air National Guard have deployed to the storm-ravaged Gulf Coast to assist with relief operations in the wake of Hurricane Katrina, which struck Mississippi and Louisiana with unprecedented force Aug. 29.

Katrina's 145-mph winds and 20-foot storm surge decimated coastal communities like Biloxi and Gulfport, Miss., killing hundreds of residents and causing more than \$20 billion in property damage, federal officials estimate. Subsequent flooding submerged up to 80 percent of New Orleans, trapping residents on rooftops without food or water amid a putrid sea of petrochemicals, sewage and human remains.

The first KyANG unit to respond was the 123rd Special Tactics Squadron, which deployed 13 pararescuemen and combat controllers to New Orleans Naval Air Sta-



Staff Sgt. Philip Speck/KyANG

See **KATRINA**, Page 8

**Top right:** Senior Airman Jeffrey Higgs, a loadmaster in the 165th Airlift Squadron, prepares rescue equipment for transport to New Orleans aboard a Kentucky C-130 on Sept. 1

**Bottom right:** Two Kentucky Air Guard special tactics troops confer as an Air Force MH-53 helicopter lands on Interstate 610 to evacuate stranded New Orleans residents. The airmen provided air traffic control for multiple makeshift landing zones during rescue operations from Sept. 1 to 6.



Photo courtesy 123rd Special Tactics Flight

## Annual field training an important step in preparing wing for upcoming inspection

**F**or those of you who attended annual field training in Gulfport, Miss., with me in late July and early August, you know what I mean when I say to those who missed the opportunity: It was an unqualified success.

Not only was it thoroughly well planned, it also was expertly executed.

The Cadre Team, under the leadership of Col. Bill Ketterer, "covered all the bases" to make this the most productive and enjoyable training exercise for this wing to date.

A massive assault on ancillary training requirements was completed, with nearly 5,000 training events logged by the 471 students attending.

Facilities, food, training classes, schedules, expert instructors and MWR events were all outstanding.

Make no mistake — this was a Herculean effort, made possible in large part by a dedicated, hard-working staff, professional, punctual students and great positive attitudes by all.

This was an important step toward our preparation for the Wing's Operational Readiness Inspection scheduled for April 2006.

Just as the exercises for our mobility functions are honing our skills to pack up and go to war, the classes of instruction provided at Gulfport allowed us to individualize our preparation by completing required readi-



**Col. Mark Kraus**  
123rd Airlift Wing Commander

ness training.

In the months ahead, we will continue to walk the path of preparation to and through a successful evaluation by the AMC Inspector General.

The scope of this inspection — to deploy, employ and redeploy by the prescribed Air Force methods — encompasses a complex endeavor with a lot of moving pieces.

To be successful, it is imperative that each of us understand and fulfill our roles as indi-

vidual Airmen and that we work together as a team.

Reduced to the basics, it means that each of us must:

*Do the right thing... at the right time... for the right reason.*

To shoot for the best two out of three will fall short of the intended mark. Don't decide to grade anything as unimportant because everything counts.

NCAA championship football coach Lou Holtz, said it like this:

*"In the successful organization, no detail is too small to escape close attention."*

The demonstration of our ability to complete the ORI will mark us as a "successful organization" in the eyes of the IG team, but let's not lose sight of the fact that the inspection is only a measuring stick of our overarching responsibility, which is to be combat ready.

The long-term look is that we want to attain and then maintain a level of readiness that will ensure our ability to respond affirmatively, forcefully and fervently should we be called upon.

And that means doing the right thing, at the right time, for the right reason.

*Mark R. Kraus*

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# KyANG marksmen sweep state tournament

Wing shooters take all individual categories and most team honors

## Cargo Courier Staff Report

In what is becoming a Spring ritual for members of the base marksmanship team, the 123rd Airlift Wing again swept the Kentucky State Pistol and Rifle Championships, held April 30 to May 1 at Fort Knox, Ky.

Fielding its strongest squad yet, the 123rd took all but one team event and won every individual category, said Master Sgt. John Martin, a longtime Kentucky Air Guard shooter.

In all, 63 competitors tested their mettle at the Fort Knox range, hoping to win a spot on the squad that will represent the state during the national tourney scheduled for October in North Little Rock, Ark.

Of those 63 shooters, 51 were members of the Kentucky Army Guard, while 12 represented the Kentucky Air Guard — the wing's largest contingent to date.

Awards won by the team include:

**Individual Rifle:** First place to Master Sgt. Jim Johnson; second place to Master Sgt. Darryl Loafman; third place to Senior Master Sgt. John Siebert.

**Team Rifle:** First place to the Air Guard (Senior Master Sgt. John Siebert, Staff Sgt. Travis Keehner, Staff Sgt. John White and Tech. Sgt. Mark Motsinger); third place to the Air Guard (Master Sgt. Jim Johnson, Tech. Sgt. Frank Tallman, Master Sgt. Mike Downs and Airman 1st Class Harry Bromley).

**Individual Pistol:** First place to Master Sgt. John Martin; second place to Master Sgt. Darryl Loafman; third place to Master Sgt. Jim Johnson.

**Team Pistol:** First place to the Air Guard (Master Sgt. John Martin, Master Sgt. Jim Johnson, Tech. Sgt. Frank Tallman and Senior Master Sgt. John Siebert); second place to the Air Guard (Master Sgt. Darryl Loafman, Master Sgt. Dave Selby, Staff Sgt. John White and Master Sgt. Mike Downs); third place to the Air Guard (Tech. Sgt. Mark Motsinger, Tech. Sgt. Cary Mendelsohn, Senior Airman Ben Bull and Tech. Sgt. Dan Blevins).



Photo courtesy KyANG Marksmanship Team

**ABOVE:** Members of the KyANG Marksmanship Team continued their winning ways during the state pistol and rifle tourney held April 30 to May 1 at Fort Knox, Ky.

**BELOW:** Team members amassed a staggering 33 trophies for their expert shooting, including multiple first-place honors.



Staff Sgt. Philip Speck/KyANG

**Novice award, First Place Pistol:** Tech. Sgt. Cary Mendelsohn.

Other participants from the Air Guard who earned accolades include Senior Airman Ashlee Richards, Master Sgt. Paul Edwards and Tech. Sgt. Charles Lambert.

Nearly 99 percent of all awards at the

state match have been earned by competitors from the 123rd Airlift Wing over the course of the last seven years, and 2005 marks the seventh year in a row and the 10th time since 1993 that personnel from the 123rd have earned the title of state champions, Sergeant Martin said.

# Wing weather troops complete Kosovo mission

Ky. Airmen recognized for mission performance

By Senior Airman T.J. Mahan  
123rd Airlift Control Flight

CAMP BONDSTEEL, Kosovo — Six Kentucky Air Guardsmen recently completed deployments here to provide weather forecasting support for U.S. Army peacekeepers assigned to Task Force Falcon.

The deployments began last winter and ranged from 90 to 180 days, said Lt. Col. Jeffrey Peters, a weather forecaster in the Kentucky Air Guard's 123rd Mission Support Group.

Joining Colonel Peters for the mission were Tech. Sgt. Derick Whitmer and Senior Airman Kevin Atkins of the 123rd Special Tactics Squadron; Master Sgt. Jeffrey Sarver and Senior Airman Jeremiah Burns of the 123rd Operations Support Flight; and Senior Airman T.J. Mahan of the 123rd Airlift Control Flight.

All were assigned to the 401st Air Expeditionary Wing, Detachment 2 Combat Weather Team at Camp Bondsteel.

While deployed, the Airmen staffed a weather station, recording hourly weather observations, giving local flight weather briefings, and issuing weather advisories, watches and warnings as necessary, Colonel Peters said.

Other duties included providing weather support to contract aerial reconnaissance companies in Skopje, Macedonia, and maintaining weather observing equipment at Camp Monteith and Film City, Kosovo — the site of NATO headquarters for the Kosovo Force (KFOR).

One major task involved the development of weather forecasts for three European locations, Colonel Peters said.

These forecasts, which contributed to the arrival of a new rotation of U.S. Army aircraft from Hoenfels, Germany, to Camp Bondsteel, proved to be challenging because



Photos courtesy 123rd Airlift Control Flight

**Above: Master Sgt. Jeffrey Sarver and Senior Airman T.J. Mahan inspect weather observing equipment while deployed to Kosovo.**



**Left: Tech. Sgt. Derrick Whitmer visits with local children during a trip to a Kosovo school.**

of the intensity of the snowy Eastern European winter, he said.

NATO's KFOR mission is designed to help demilitarize Kosovo, enforce law and order, and, in partnership with the United Nations Mission In Kosovo, assist the local population in transforming the province into a free and democratic society.

Volunteerism is encouraged to support these goals, Colonel Peters said, and the Kentucky Airmen did their part to help.

They spent many hours performing volunteer work on and off post, he noted, teaching

classes at local schools, donating supplies to area orphanages and hosting tours of Camp Bondsteel for Kosovo schoolchildren.

The group also was recognized for going above and beyond the call in the performance of its primary mission, Colonel Peters said.

Airscan, Inc., an aerial reconnaissance contractor, presented a letter of appreciation to the Kentucky Airmen for their accurate and timely flight weather briefs and forecasts, he said.

## STS

Continued from Page 10

and sewage," he said. "It was a giant petri dish. But they knew that what they were

doing was important. They chose to be totally selfless and help fellow citizens of the United States. They're the biggest heroes on the planet as far as I'm concerned."

Sergeant Rosa noted that many New Orleans residents seemed to agree.

"All the folks we rescued down there were

so thankful," he said. "I had about 20 people come up and hug me while I was trying to control helicopter landings. That's very self-satisfying.

"My heart goes out to the folks down there," he added. "If they ever need us to come back, we'll be there."



# Field training sharpens combat readiness

## Hundreds deploy to Gulfport CRTC for summer school

By Capt. Dale Greer  
Wing Public Affairs Officer

GULFPORT, Miss. — Excellent planning, outstanding execution and a pervasive can-do spirit combined to make the wing's 2005 Annual Field Training among the best such events in KyANG history, unit members say.

More than 470 students and an 80-person cadre of instructors and facilitators deployed here to the Gulfport Combat Readiness Training Center for the exercise, which was accomplished in two six-day rotations between July 24 and Aug. 3.

During that time, Kentucky Air Guard members accomplished nearly 5,000 ancillary training events on topics ranging from self-aid and buddy care to chemical warfare decontamination.

"We accomplished a tremendous amount of training in a very short period of time," said Col. Bill Ketterer, who served as detachment commander at the Gulfport CRTC.

By way of comparison, Colonel Ketterer said it would have taken an entire year to achieve the same amount of training at home during drill weekends.

The deployed environment also helped unit members focus intently on the task at hand, resulting in a better quality of training.

"People don't get distracted here like they can at home during drill weekends," said Col.

Mark Kraus, commander of the 123rd Airlift Wing and a student himself during the Gulfport deployment.

"The instructors had enough time to prepare excellent materials and present them in a focused manner with none of the disruptions we have back home."

Master Sgt. John Martin, who deployed during the second rotation, agreed.

"The training was kind of like going to college," said Martin, first sergeant for the 123rd Support Group. "You went from one class to another on a clockwork schedule, and that kept you focused on what you needed to accom-



Capt. Dale Greer/KyANG



Tech. Sgt. Dennis Flora/KyANG

Annual Field Training events included self-aid and buddy care classes and chemical warfare defense instruction. Maj. Sae Na and Capt. Ash Groves administer first aid to a fallen Airman (top) while Master Sgt. Mike Nagel helps decontaminate another Kentucky troop.

See **FIELD TRAINING**, Page 6

# Field training

Continued from Page 5

plish. The environment was very conducive to learning.”

It didn’t hurt that the Gulfport CRTC has some of the finest facilities in the nation, with more than \$100 million in new construction during the past 10 years. That includes a base swimming pool, a 24-hour fitness center, a modern dining hall and hotel-quality housing with single-person accommodations, private showers, in-room cable TV, refrigerators and microwaves.

“I don’t know what more you could want in a training facility,” Colonel Kraus said.

While the schedule was packed full with training events, unit members also found time to relax with coworkers and build *esprit de corps*.

Others spent downtime with loved ones — more than 40 Airmen brought along family members — while visiting nearby attractions in Biloxi, Miss.; Mobile, Ala.; and New Orleans.

“I think we had a nice balance, with just enough free time to relax a bit and have some fun together,” Colonel Kraus said.

Those kinds of team-building experiences, coupled with excellent training, mean the wing now has a leg up on its next Operational Readiness Inspection, planned for April 2006.

“There is no doubt in my mind that we are all much better prepared for our upcoming ORI,” Colonel Ketterer said.

With so much ancillary training now accomplished, wing members also will have more time on drill weekends to complete duty-specific training.

Moving forward, the plan is to limit home-station ancillary training to one weekend each quarter and accomplish the bulk of such events during AFT like the Gulfport deployment, Colonel Ketterer said.

“That will leave two weekends each quarter where we can be dedicated to on-the-job-training for our individual specialties,” he said.

Colonel Ketterer credited the success

Annual Field Training events covered the gamut from work to play. Clockwise from right: live-fire qualification; pallet build-up; basewide picnic; Gulfport CRTC entrance; chemical warfare decontamination; aircrew water survival training.



Tech. Sgt. Dennis Flora/KyANG

## GULFPORT TRAINING AT A GLANCE

<b>M-16 Qualification</b>	<b>474 People</b>
<b>M-9 Qualification</b>	<b>259 People</b>
<b>Suicide Awareness</b>	<b>490 people</b>
<b>Force Protection</b>	<b>490 People</b>
<b>Chem Warfare (Classroom)</b>	<b>507 People</b>
<b>Chem Warfare (Practical)</b>	<b>506 People</b>
<b>Computer Security</b>	<b>491 People</b>
<b>Self-Aid &amp; Buddy Care</b>	<b>380 People</b>
<b>Pallet Build-Up</b>	<b>370 People</b>
<b>Flightline Driver Training</b>	<b>484 People</b>
<b>Mobility 101</b>	<b>369 People</b>

of the Gulfport AFT to the hard work of the instructor cadre and the positive mindset of every student in attendance.

“The cadre we had here was willing to do just about anything to make the mission happen,” Colonel Ketterer said. “They spent a lot of time planning the events so classes would flow smoothly. And while we had a very good plan, the execution of that plan required all members to be prompt for classes. I saw nothing but positive attitudes all the way around.”

The wing will continue preparations for its 2006 inspection with a mobility exercise to be held on base during the October UTA.

Wing members also will deploy to the Savannah Combat Readiness Training Center in Savannah, Ga., for an Operational Readiness Exercise in November.



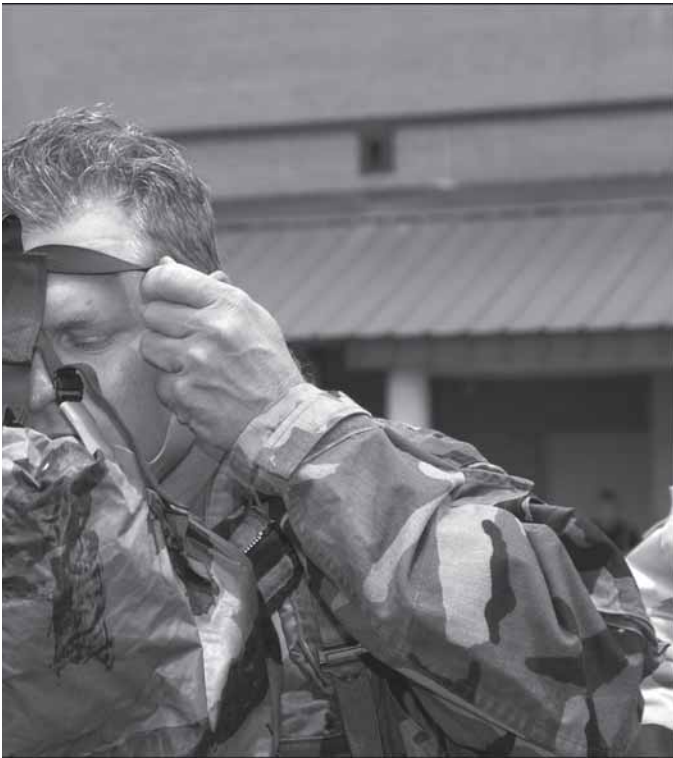




Tech. Sgt. Dennis Flora/KyANG



Capt. Dale Greer/KyANG



Tech. Sgt. Dennis Flora/KyANG



Capt. Dale Greer/KyANG



Capt. Dale Greer/KyANG

# Katrina

Continued from Front Page

tion on Aug. 31, said Chief Master Sgt. Pat Malone, a pararescueman and the unit's chief enlisted manager.

That first contingent assessed the situation upon arrival and requested more personnel and equipment, Chief Malone said. Nine more special tactics troops and support personnel then deployed from Louisville on Sept. 1.

Once in New Orleans, the 22 Kentucky airmen joined forces with other Air Guard special tactics troops from Alaska, California, New York and Oregon to conduct search-and-rescue missions using Zodiac motorboats.

"At any given time, we had a total package of about 45 people from all the pararescue and special tactics units in the Air National Guard," Chief Malone said. "It was quite a combined effort to make the difference we did."

That difference is born out by the numbers: The Kentucky-led special tactics force rescued 1,206 people by boat, and an additional 86 were recovered on dry ground before the airmen returned home Sept. 7.

The contingent also was responsible for controlling the flights of 3,179 helicopter sorties that evacuated 11,927 people from New Orleans.

The special tactics troops returned home last week, but many of the mobilized Kentucky Airmen will remain in the Gulf region for 30 days or longer.

These include:

- 31 members of the 123rd Security Forces Squadron who deployed to Baton Rouge, La., on Sept. 2. The Airmen are assisting local law enforcement as needed and providing security at Red Cross facilities set up to serve evacuees on the campus of Louisiana State University, said Master Sgt. Rhett Perdue, the squadron's superintendent.

- 15 members of the 123rd Aerial Port Squadron who deployed to the former England Air Force Base in Alexandria, La., on Sept. 3. The Airmen established an aerial port hub to serve mostly Coast Guard and Air Force aircraft moving supplies into stricken areas, said Chief Master Sgt. Tommy Downs, superintendent of the 123rd Aerial Port Squadron.

- 9 members of the 123rd Airlift Control Flight who established command and con-



Staff Sgt. Philip Speck/KyANG

**A member of the wing's 123rd Aerial Port Squadron off-load pallets of water donated by The Kroger Co. on Sept. 2. The water is being used for relief efforts in the Gulf.**

trol of airlift operations at Alexandria International Airport in Louisiana. The initial tasking was to ensure that food and water were moving into New Orleans, said Staff Sgt. Josh Ketterer, a command post controller assigned to the unit. As of Sept. 12, flight members had controlled 88 sorties responsible for moving more than 600 passengers and a million pounds of cargo.

- 14 members of the 123rd Medical Squadron who deployed to New Orleans Naval Air Station and Gulfport, Miss., in multiple phases beginning Sept. 6. The Airmen are providing dental care, emergency medicine and in-patient services as part of a field-transportable hospital, said Chief Master Sgt. Johnie Cherry, chief of health services for the 123rd Medical Squadron.

- 7 members of the 123rd Services Flight who deployed to the Gulfport Combat Readiness Training Center on Sept. 7. The Airmen are preparing up to 2,000 meals a day for service members deployed to Gulfport as part of relief efforts, said Chief Master Sgt. Veronica Holliman, services flight superintendent.

- 2 members of the 123rd Airlift Wing Chaplain's Office who deployed to Camp Shelby, Miss., on Sept. 7 to minister to military members and evacuees, said Lt. Col. Tom Curry, chief chaplain for Kentucky's

123rd Airlift Wing.

The wing also has been flying cargo and troops to the region aboard Kentucky C-130s since Aug. 31, Chief Downs said.

As of Sept. 12, the 165th Airlift Squadron had completed 19 sorties, flying 370,000 pounds of cargo, supplies, food and water to cities such as New Orleans, Baton Rouge, Gulfport and Hattiesburg, Miss.

All told, the combined efforts add up to an impressive amount of assistance, said Col. Mark Kraus, commander of the 123rd Airlift Wing.

"I'm very proud of our wing's response to assist our neighbors in Louisiana and Mississippi in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina," Colonel Kraus said.

"We were among the first states to airlift troops, both Air and Army, into the affected area to provide first-responder search and rescue, security forces, cargo handling and airlift control, teams of doctors and medical personnel, and Chaplains with staff.

"Behind those folks who deployed was virtually the rest of the wing, which tirelessly choreographed the departures and continues to support the sustainment of forces in that region," he said.

"There is no greater purpose than to provide aid and comfort to those in need. It's the best part of what the Guard is all about."



# Special tactics troops recall Katrina evacuations

Kentucky forces led multi-state effort that rescued 1,200 people

By Capt. Dale Greer  
Wing Public Affairs Officer

Chief Master Sgt. Pat Malone has seen a lot in his 23 years as a pararescueman for the U.S. military, including dicey combat extractions in Iraq and Afghanistan and more than a decade worth of civilian search-and-rescue missions in Alaska.

But none of it prepared him for the devastation he saw firsthand when he and 21 comrades deployed to New Orleans Naval Air Station earlier this month as part of efforts to evacuate the victims of Hurricane Katrina and the ensuing flood.

"This was, by and large, the worst site of devastation I have ever seen in my entire career," said Chief Malone, the chief enlisted manager for the Kentucky Air Guard's 123rd Special Tactics Squadron.

"The sheer magnitude of it — and the conditions that our guys worked in — was the most horrific I've seen in 23 years of service."

Senior Master Sgt. Jon Rosa, a Kentucky combat controller who also deployed with the 123rd Special Tactics Flight, concurred.

"New Orleans is usually a place of such revelry," said Sergeant Rosa, the squadron's superintendent of combat controllers.

"But it was like a scene out of 'The Twilight Zone' to be in downtown New Orleans and hear total silence except for the sloshing of flood waters. I just couldn't believe this was America."

But it was America, and thousands of New Orleanians were stranded without provisions amid a sea of sewage- and chemical-laced water covering nearly 80 percent of the city.

Sergeant Rosa, Chief Malone and 20 other Kentucky special tactics troops were among the first military search-and-rescue troops to arrive in the stricken city and begin extracting trapped citizens starting Aug. 31.

The Kentucky forces joined up with about 25 other special tactics troops from across the Air National Guard, including units in



Photos courtesy 123rd Special Tactics Squadron

A combat controller with the Kentucky Air Guard and a pararescueman from the Alaska Air Guard evacuate New Orleans residents via Zodiac rescue boats.



Senior Master Sgt. Jon Rosa, left, and Chief Master Sgt. Pat Malone, right, direct the actions of special tactics troops engaged in search and rescue missions.

See STS, Page 10

# STS

Continued from Page 9

Alaska, California, New York and Oregon.

Patrolling the city in Zodiac motorboats and other vehicles, the Kentucky-led contingent rescued 1,292 people, sometimes by cutting through roofs to extract trapped residents.

"We had the ability to go through the city and conduct searches where no one else could reach at the time," Chief Malone said. "We launched from four to 14 boats a day, running about 14-hour shifts in the water."

Once evacuees climbed aboard the Zodiacs, they were transported to makeshift helicopter landing zones set up along portions of the interstate highway system that weren't submerged by flood waters.

The landing zones were cleared by saw-wielding combat controllers who cut down light poles to remove obstructions and then marked the spots with spray paint so information like communications frequencies would be visible from the air, Sergeant Rosa said. After an LZ was established, combat controllers would make radio contact with any of the three airborne controlling authorities — entities like an Air Force AWACS plane — and advise that evacuees were ready for transport.

As helicopters began to roll in, the controllers would direct their safe flight into and out of the landing zones using the communications gear they carry on their backs.

One particularly productive LZ became so active that a new helicopter was landing every 50 seconds for 48 straight hours, Sergeant Rosa said.

"For a while, I would imagine it was the busiest airport on the face of the earth," he noted.

By the time the Kentucky Airmen returned home Sept. 7, the Air Guard special tactics contingent had controlled the flights of 3,179 sorties responsible for the evacuation of 11,927 people.

Working conditions were challenging, to say the least. Most troops got less than six hours of sleep a night, and the constant exposure to contaminated water caused rashes and minor chemical burns on some of the Airmen, Chief Malone said.

"These guys were working in a giant cesspool contaminated with any chemical in anyone's garage, oil, gas, deceased animals



**Top:** A Kentucky combat controller cuts down a light pole along Interstate 610 to clear a landing zone for helicopters.



**Left:** Evacuees board a chopper for airlift out of New Orleans.

**Bottom:** A Kentucky special tactics troop searches for stranded New Orleans residents.



Photos courtesy 123rd Special Tactics Squadron

See STS, Page 4



## Senate confirms top leadership

SAN ANTONIO (AFPN) — The Senate confirmed Gen. T. Michael Moseley as the next Air Force chief of staff on July 1 and Lt. Gen. John D. W. Corley as the new Air Force vice chief of staff on Aug. 1.

General Corley will be promoted to the rank of general.

General Moseley last served as vice chief of staff, while General Corley is currently the principal deputy for the assistant secretary of the Air Force for acquisition.

General Moseley is a command pilot with more than 2,800 hours in T-37 Tweet, T-38 Talon and F-15 Eagle. He is a graduate of Texas A&M University where he earned both a bachelor's and a master's degree in political science. He commanded U.S. Central Command Air Forces and served as Combined Forces Air Component Command commander for operations Southern Watch, Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom.

General Corley entered the Air Force in 1973 and has commanded at the squadron, group and wing levels. He has more than 3,000 flying hours with combat experience. As combined air operations center director supporting Operation Enduring Freedom, General Corley coordinated more than 11,000 combat missions striking more than 4,700 targets.

## Certificates to recognize Cold War service

The Secretary of Defense has approved the awarding of Cold War Recognition Certificates to all members of the armed forces and qualified federal employees who faithfully and honorably served the United States during the Cold War era. For more information, visit <https://www.hrc.army.mil/site/active/tagd/coldwar/default.htm>.

# Service begins implementing new 'eMail for Life' addresses

By Master Sgt. Mitch Gettle  
Air Force Print News

WASHINGTON — The Air Force began the first phase of a new e-mail system May 6 that will enhance communication of Airmen worldwide.

AF eMail (also known as eMail-for-Life) is a single, static e-mail address that will not change during the career of an Airman or Air Force civilian employee.

The current e-mail system, rapid mobility of the force and frequent assignments and career development opportunities outside the Air Force can make it difficult for Airmen to communicate.

"At any given time, we can only reliably connect and communicate with 79 percent of our force through e-mail," said Capt. Kirk Phillips, information technology division chief at the Air Force Senior Leader Management Office.

"E-mail is the most critical communication tool that we're using to implement force development and transform our personnel process. Industry-standard e-business solutions require static e-mail addresses, and that is the direction the Air Force is headed," Captain Phillips said.

Airmen will be able to complete personnel actions in minutes through e-mail and the Internet, along with other benefits, he said.

"Not only is there a huge potential for Air Force cost avoidance, but mission support will be greatly enhanced by empowering every member to reliably connect and com-

municate with each other without worry about changing e-mail addresses every couple of years," Captain Phillips said.

"We'll be able to transform personnel processes under the Air Force directorate of personnel's personnel service delivery model and empower members and databases to connect and communicate through e-business applications instead of local personnel flights."

Those personnel processes include official personnel notifications and announcements; command, promotion and professional military education candidacy and selection; and retirement, assignment, evaluation, feedback and decoration processing.

Officials said they plan for the Air Force to be fully capable under AF eMail by 2007. Currently, every senior Air Force official has been provided an account.

"We've segmented the force based on mission requirements and will slowly scale the availability to the entire force versus an all-at-once implementation," Captain Phillips said. "We started with the highest level leaders, and our plan is to offer it to other segments of the force this summer."

During the initial stages, Airmen will continue to use their local or major command e-mail accounts as well as the AF eMail account.

"Until the migration of e-mail accounts happens, it's each member's responsibility to check the AF eMail account on a regular basis," Captain Phillips said. "That's where their career-affecting personnel actions will be."

## Geren named acting AF secretary

SAN ANTONIO (AFPN) — The president designated Pete Geren to be the acting Secretary of the Air Force on June 29, replacing Michael L. Dominguez.

The appointment is in accordance with the Federal Vacancies Reform Act, Air Force officials said.

Mr. Geren, who was special assistant to the secretary of defense, assumes his new office as directed in Title 10, United States Code and Air Force directives, Air Force officials said. He took the Department of

Defense post in September 2001 with responsibilities in the areas of interagency initiatives, legislative affairs and special projects.

A former Texas congressman 1989 to 1997, Mr. Geren served on the Armed Services, Science and Technology and the Public Works and Transportation committees during his tenure. He earned his bachelor of science degree from the University of Texas in 1974, and his jurist prudence from the university's law school in 1978.